

Immunization Registry Progress in Montana

Immunization Coverage in Montana:

According to National Immunization Survey (NIS) data for July 1998 to June 1999, the percentage of children 19-35 months of age who were up-to-date with 4 doses of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, 3 doses of poliomyelitis, and 1 dose of measles, mumps, rubella vaccine was 83%, three percentage points above the national average (80%) and ranking 17th among all states in this immunization coverage category.

Current registry: Local Immunization Information System

Registry under development: Integrated Data for Evaluation and Assessment (IDEA)

Background:

Montana has developed 52 separate county-based immunization registries. Flathead County has developed their own registry system. Wheatland County reaches into a section of Golden Valley County through a WIC project, and includes those Golden Valley children in their registry system. Thus, immunization registry systems are located in 53 out of the 56 counties in Montana, and include children in 54 of those 56 counties. The Immunization Program in Montana currently supports two different software systems for the 52 county registries spread over 145,000 square miles.

Currently, Montana is developing an integrated software package to support not only a new and improved immunization registry, but Maternal Child and Family Planning systems as well. This system is the Integrated Data for Evaluation and Assessment (IDEA) project. IDEA is being developed to improve service delivery at local public health departments, to eliminate duplicate input, and to provide a more comprehensive data system. The IDEA project pilot sites are Missoula and Butte. The pilot program will begin in July of 1999.

The independent registry system in Flathead County plans to join the IDEA project when the system is accessible to the counties; therefore, one software system and one database will exist at that time.

To help support the IDEA project, Montana applied for and received an INPHO grant award from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, and became a demonstration project for data integration.

Some challenges and barriers affecting registry progress:

Recruitment of private providers has been problematic in some areas.

Current political or legislative factors affecting registry activity:

Some confidentiality issues are beginning to have an impact on immunization registry development. As a child's immunization history is currently regarded as a medical record, Montana is faced with the challenge of constructing a system which is secure enough to satisfy the legal requirements of a confidential medical record while being accessible and useful to providers.

Current financial outlook for registry activity:

There is a need for closer partnerships between the Department of Health and Human Services and the county health departments to support ongoing public health needs.

Helpful immunization and immunization registry contacts in Montana:

Registry Contact Person:

Name: Jim Aspevig
Title: Health Information Specialist
Address: WF Cogswell Bldg., Room C317
1400 Broadway
Helena, MT, 59620
Phone: (406) 444-5941
Fax: (406) 444-2920
Email: jaspevig@state.mt.us

Web site: <http://www.dphhs.state.mt.us/hpsd>

Select the link to Public Health; select the link to Disease Prevention and Control, and finally, select the link to Immunization.

Suggestions for Mrs. Racicot's involvement and support:

The Montana Immunization Program will continue to solicit Mrs. Racicot's support in recruiting private practice physicians to join the registry. The program thanks Mrs. Racicot for her help, and is grateful for her support, her ability to work with the media, and her genuine interest in their efforts.